

DOCKET NO: 242160US-2 CONT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF :
TETSURO MOTOYAMA, ET AL. : EXAMINER: PRICE, NATHAN
SERIAL NO: 10/684,434 :
FILED: OCTOBER 15, 2003 : GROUP ART UNIT: 2194
FOR: REMOTE SYSTEM USAGE :
MONITORING WITH FLEXIBLE
PACKAGING OF DATA

REPLY BRIEF

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313

SIR:

In reply to the Examiner's Answer of March 21, 2008, Applicants submit the following comments in the present Reply Brief.

Remarks begin on page 2 of this paper.

REMARKS

The outstanding Examiner's Answer maintains the outstanding prior art rejection of the claims over U.S. patent 6,202,119 to Wygodny et al. (herein "Wygodny") in view of U.S. patent 5,414,494 to Aikens et al. (herein "Aikens"). The outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is withdrawn.

With respect to the above-noted prior art rejection, applicants respectfully submit the basis for maintaining the rejection set forth in the outstanding Examiner's Answer is misconstruing the applied art relative to the claims as written.

According to features recited in the claims, a monitoring unit monitors the selecting of operations on an operation panel of an image forming apparatus by a user, generates a log of that monitored data, and communicates data based on that log of the monitored data. Thereby, with the claimed structures and operations, which operations a user selects on an operation panel of an image forming apparatus can be monitored and then logged. Such an operation allows monitoring of how a user utilizes an operation panel of an image forming device, i.e., what buttons and in what order the buttons on an image forming apparatus operation panel are pressed by a user is monitored and then logged. With such data it can then be evaluated and determined how a user utilizes an operation panel of an image forming apparatus, so that the operation panel can be improved.

The Examiner's Answer cites Aikens to disclose a feature of monitoring "key events" in an image forming device, which would include functions that are selected by user or executed, the outstanding Examiner's Answer citing Aikens specifically at column 4, lines 15-64.¹ Applicants respectfully submit that reliance on the teachings in Aikens is misconstruing the teachings in Aikens relative to the claimed features.

¹ Examiner's Answer of March 21, 2008 the paragraph bridging pp. 6 and 7 and the full paragraph on p. 7.

The noted disclosure in Aikens merely indicates the standard use of an interface 36; and applicants accept an interface 36 in Aikens will include keys to be selected by an operator. However, the claims are not directed to merely executing routines based on keys selected by an operator. Instead, in the claims as written a log of the selected operations on the operation panel is generated and then sent out. That is, the different operations selected on an operation panel in the claimed invention are logged, and then that log data is communicated.

For Aikens to be even remotely related to the claimed features Aikens would have to disclose that the noted "key events" are placed in a log and are then communicated. Aikens does not disclose or suggest any such features.

The outstanding rejection appears to be disregarding basic concepts of the claimed invention of monitoring operations selected by a user on an operation panel, logging that monitored data, and then communicating that log.

Aikens clearly does not disclose or suggest the features relied upon in the basis for the outstanding rejection, namely Aikens does not disclose or suggest generating a log of monitored keys selected by a user and communicating such a log.

The Examiner's Answer cites Wygodny at column 5, lines 12-23; column 6, lines 3-11; column 19, lines 42-60; and column 20, lines 50-53 to disclose a monitoring unit that generates a log of monitored data.²

In reply to those grounds for the rejection applicants note at column 5, lines 12-23 Wygodny discloses the "Bug Trapper" can trace execution of a program. Column 6, lines 3-11 disclose that a trace control information (TCI) file can be generated. However, that TCI file does *not* include data of operations selected on an operation panel. As noted above, Aikens also does not disclose or suggest monitoring and logging operations selected on an

² The Examiner's Answer of March 21, 2008, p. 4, first paragraph.

operation panel, and thus no combination of teachings in Aikens to that TCI file in Wygodny would correspond to the claimed features.

Further, at column 19, lines 42-60 Wygodny again merely notes being able to provide a tracing online, but again such a tracing is not directed to monitoring operations on an operation panel selected by a user.

Further, at column 20, lines 53-56 Wygodny merely discloses a trace detail pane 316 can show time stamps. Applicants submit that disclosure in Wygodny is not even directed to the claimed features in which the time stamp is directed to a format of generating a log of monitored data, the monitored data directed to the selecting of the plurality of operations of the operation panel by the user. In the claims a time stamp can be included with data of when a user selects an operation on an operation panel. The time stamp display noted in Wygodny at column 20, lines 53-56 is not directed to any similar time stamp.

Applicants also point out neither Wygodny nor Aikens is even directed to subject matter similar to the claimed invention. Wygodny as noted above, and as also pointed out in the filed Appeal Brief, is directed to a debugging and tracing operation, and will not even need to operate when the system with the software therein is properly operating.

Aikens is directed to a method of automatic notification of selected remote devices in response to machine conditions detected by a machine monitoring element including display machine condition options for a selection of predetermined machine conditions for automatic notification to remote stations.³ In such a system of Aikens if the machine is correctly operating with enough supplies, the system will not provide any notifications to a remote service person.

In contrast to such devices in Wygodny and Aikens, the claimed invention is directed to monitoring a user's usage of an operation panel of an image forming apparatus, generating


³ Abstract of Aikens.

a log of that monitored data, and then communicating that log. Thereby, the claimed invention is designed to operate under normal operating conditions of an image forming apparatus. The claimed invention is not directed to tracing the underlying software of the image forming apparatus as in Wygodny or to monitoring machine conditions as in Aikens. The claimed invention allows monitoring the operations selected by a user on an operation panel of an image forming apparatus, and such operations selected by the user can then later be evaluated. Neither Wygodny nor Aikens is directed to any similar features.

In view of the comments presented in the Appeal Brief filed December 20, 2007 and the foregoing comments, applicants respectfully submit the outstanding rejection is improper and must be REVERSED.

Respectfully submitted,

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